

## Top news stories from AMA Morning Rounds®: Week of Dec. 21, 2020

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Read *AMA Morning Rounds*®' most popular stories in medicine and public health from the week of Dec. 21, 2020 – Dec. 25, 2020.

### **CDC's ACIP recommends that essential workers and adults 75 and older should receive coronavirus vaccines next**

The Washington Post (12/20, A1, Sun, Stanley-Becker) reports the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommended that "grocery store workers, teachers, day-care staff and other people on the front lines of America's workforce should be next to get coronavirus vaccine, along with adults aged 75 and older." The recommendations "will guide state authorities in deciding who should have priority to receive limited doses of vaccines made by Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna."

The New York Times (12/20, Goodnough, Hoffman) reports "the debate about who should receive the vaccine in these early months has grown increasingly urgent as the daily tally of cases has swelled to numbers unimaginable even a month ago." The article adds that ACIP's recommendations represent "a compromise between two high-risk population groups."

Among other sources covering the story are The Hill (12/20, Coleman), USA Today (12/20, Weise), and the Wall Street Journal (12/20, McKay, Subscription Publication).

### **Significant systolic BP reading difference between two arms may be warning sign of future heart attack or stroke, meta-analysis indicates**

CNN (12/21, LaMotte) reports, "A significant difference in the systolic...blood pressure reading between the two arms could be a warning sign of a future heart attack or stroke," investigators concluded. The research "found that for each degree of difference between the two arms over 10 millimeters of mercury, the risk of having new angina...a heart attack or a stroke increased by 1%

over the next decade.” The findings of the 24-study meta-analysis were published online in the journal Hypertension.

## **CDC says new strain of SARS-CoV-2 now dominant in U.K. could be in United States**

Bloomberg (12/22, Annett) reports the new strain of SARS-CoV-2 that has become prevalent in the UK in recent weeks could be in the U.S., according to the CDC. On Tuesday, the agency said on its website that no cases of the strain have been found in the U.S. so far, however, “the agency said viruses have only been sequenced from about 51,000 of the 17 million U.S. cases.”

The Hill (12/22, Weixel) reports the CDC added, “Ongoing travel between the United Kingdom and the United States, as well as the high prevalence of this variant among current U.K. infections, increase the likelihood of importation. Given the small fraction of U.S. infections that have been sequenced, the variant could already be in the United States without having been detected.”

Meanwhile, Reuters (12/22, Miller, Weiss) reports that coronavirus vaccine developers, including Pfizer and Moderna, are working to assess whether their vaccines are effective against the new strain.

## **CDC monitoring reports of allergic reactions to COVID-19 vaccination**

Reuters (12/19, Singh) reported the CDC “said it was monitoring reports of allergic reactions to the COVID-19 vaccination and made recommendations on how people with histories of allergies should proceed.” The article adds that the agency recommends that anyone who had a severe reaction to the first dose of the vaccine should not receive the second dose.

## **Nearly three quarters of adults in U.S. are overweight, CDC says**



The Washington Post (12/18) reports nearly 74% of U.S. adults are overweight, “according to an analysis of the CDC data published in Annals of Internal Medicine.” That number includes nearly 43% of adults who have obesity. Among “adults, the highest rates of obesity are among middle-aged people, especially men.”

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